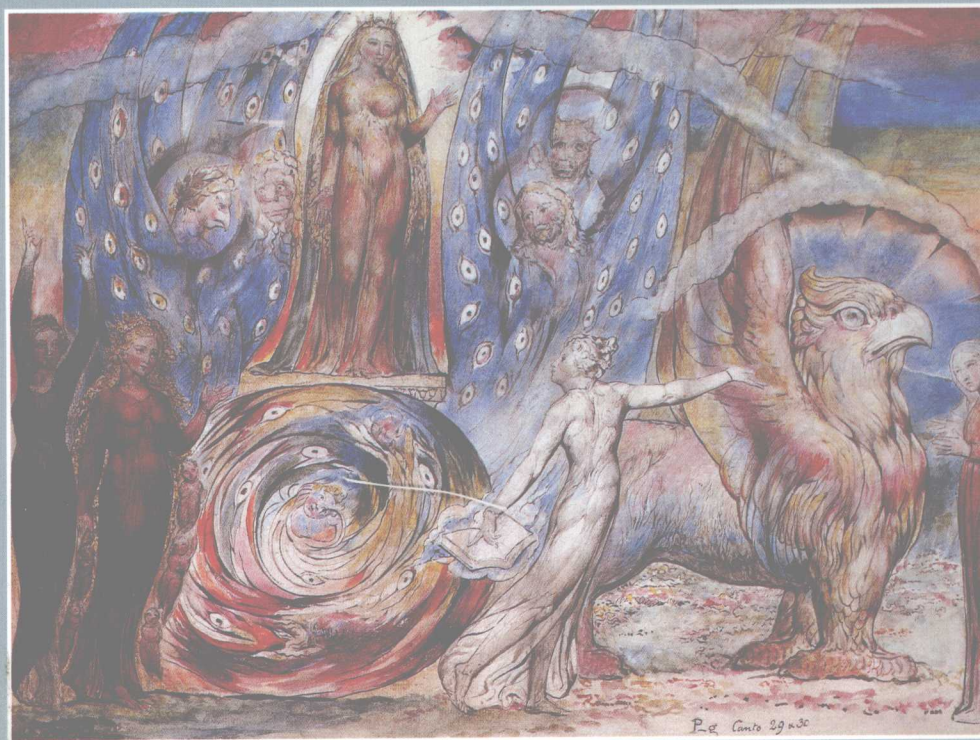


THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY OF POETRY

FOURTH EDITION



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The Norton Anthology of Poetry

FOURTH EDITION



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The Norton Anthology
of Poetry

FOURTH EDITION

Preface to the Fourth Edition

A poem is a record of remarkable language, written or spoken; in the case of a good poem, a record undamaged by the centuries and continents it may have crossed since poet or scribe put pen to paper. This dramatically expanded Fourth Edition of *The Norton Anthology of Poetry* brings together more than sixteen hundred such records from “the round earth’s imagined corners.” We have set out to provide readers with a wide and deep sampling of the best poetry written in the English language. That previous editions have succeeded in this endeavor, within the limits of the pages available in a single volume, seems manifest in the acceptance of those editions by teachers and students alike. But, as our friend and advisor M. H. Abrams has said in another context, “a vital literary culture is always on the move,” both in the appearance of new works and in the altering response to existing texts: hence, a Fourth Edition, which broadens and refines that cultural tradition. Our efforts have been crucially helped by the practical criticism and informed suggestions provided to us by the many teachers who have used the anthology in their classes. In the best sense, then, the vitality of our literary culture has been demonstrated by this collaboration.

In assembling the new edition we, like our predecessors, have worked toward a balance between the older and the newer. Thus, while more than one hundred twentieth-century voices are heard here for the first time, forty earlier poets are also new to the book. This signal increase in poets and poems reflects the book’s strengthened geographic and ethnic diversity: the many traditions of American poetry are more fully represented by better than double the number of African-American, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian-American poets (fifteen newly included). In addition to thirty-seven new English poets, the anthology includes fifty-four poets from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, the Caribbean, South Africa, and India. The work of women poets, with special attention to the early periods, is dramatically expanded with fifty-five new voices, seventy-nine in all. Even so, we would have wished to include many more voices in every category, had space permitted, and regretted having to exclude poets born after 1960.

The broadened representation of poets in the Fourth Edition speaks as well to greater historical and formal range and expanded pedagogical possibilities. The beginnings of poetry in English are now richly represented by Old English selections, including Cædmon’s *Hymn*, selections from *Beowulf*, *The Seafarer*, *The Wife’s Lament*, and popular riddles; and the Middle English selections newly include selections from the great long poems *Pearl* and *Piers Plowman*. These additions enable the study of the history of the English language and English poetic meters from Anglo-Saxon times to the present day.

The vernacular tradition, in which the poet “Anon” has spoken eloquently over the centuries, is now brought forward from medieval lyrics and Elizabethan and Jacobean poems to African-American spirituals and popular ballads of the twentieth century, two new clusters of poems. Teachers can trace the

history of the epic by comparing openings and selections from *Beowulf*, *The Faerie Queene* (which we now represent with the complete first canto of book 1), *Paradise Lost*, Anne Killigrew's unfinished *Alexandreis*, Pope's (mock-epic) *The Rape of the Lock*, and Wordsworth's *Prelude*. Light verse, too, can now be taught more nimbly, with new selections by Wendy Cope, James Fenton, and John Updike to add to those by Lewis Carroll, W. S. Gilbert, Edward Lear, Ogden Nash, and Dorothy Parker.

In addition, the Fourth Edition opens up intertextual "dialogues" among poets in their time, such as Alexander Pope, Matthew Green, and Anne Finch on "the spleen"; within a traditional form, as in the way Jean Elliot's eighteenth-century ballad "The Flowers of the Forest" resonates in C. Day Lewis' song "I've heard them lilting at loom and belting" and Pete Seeger's ballad "Where Have All the Flowers Gone?"; across centuries and cultures, as, for example, William Wordsworth's "Nuns Fret Not at Their Convent's Narrow Room" and Gwendolyn Brooks' "birth in a narrow room" meditate on the limits and possibilities of the sonnet form; or in response to a common text, as in the four versions of Psalm 58 (Mary Sidney's, that of *The Massachusetts Bay Psalm Book*, Isaac Watts', and Christopher Smart's). To bring these potential dialogues to readers' attention, we have added a number of cross-referencing annotations.

The Fourth Edition includes many longer poems, since these belong in a collection representative not merely of the lyric and epigrammatic, but of the entire range of poetic genres in English. Among the longer poems new to this edition are Aemilia Lanyer's "The Description of Cooke-ham" and Richard Howard's "Nikolaus Mardruz to His Master Ferdinand, Count of Tyrol, 1565," as well as teachable excerpts from John Skelton's "Phillip Sparow" and "Colin Clout," Charlotte Smith's "Beachy Head," Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh*, William Carlos Williams' "Asphodel, That Greeny Flower," and James Merrill's *The Changing Light at Sandover*. Although it is impossible to include all of *The Faerie Queene*, *Paradise Lost*, *The Prelude*, *Song of Myself*, or *The Dream Songs*, students will find representative and self-sufficient selections from each of these works.

In addition to expanding representation, we have made a special effort to reconsider, and in some instances reselect, the work of poets retained from earlier editions. Almost all poets who have produced important works since our last edition have been updated; among them are Seamus Heaney, Margaret Atwood, and Derek Walcott. But Chaucer has been reexamined, too; so also, to name a few of the many other poets of the past, have Spenser, Shakespeare, Bradstreet, Tennyson, Dickinson, and Moore.

Editorial Procedures

The order is chronological, poets appearing according to their dates of birth and their poems according to dates of publication (estimated dates of composition in the case of Old and Middle English poets) in volume form. These dates are printed at the end of the poem, and to the right; when two dates are printed at the end of the poem, they indicate published versions that differ in an important way. Dates on the left, when given, are those of composition.

We have in several areas reconsidered texts with an eye to restoring spellings and punctuation that are subtly integral to metrical and visual character of the poem. In editing the Middle English poems, we have retained as many old spellings as possible to give the modern reader a sense of the period's differ-

ence from our own in matters orthographical. The forms “thorn” (used for the “th” sound) and “yogh” (used for “g,” “gh,” and “y” or “z” depending on the context) have been replaced by their appropriate modern equivalents. The letters “u/v” and “i/j” and “i/y,” which are often used interchangeably in manuscripts, have been regularized according to modern usage. Because there was no standard English spelling, it varies from manuscript to manuscript and is affected by the marked variations in dialects spoken in different parts of Britain. For the early modern texts, we have modernized spellings and punctuation except where there is a clear semantic dimension to the original spelling and/or punctuation practices, as in Wyatt’s poems (many of which appear in his own handwriting in manuscript form) or Spenser’s (which are replete with graphic puns). Beginning with Emerson for American poets and Hardy for British poets, we have started the ongoing project of restoring original spelling and punctuation, in the belief that the poets’ choices, when they pose no difficulties for student readers, should be respected.

Annotation in the Fourth Edition has been thoroughly revised. In keeping with recent developments in editing, we have introduced notes that mention significant textual variants. These are intended to spark classroom discussion about poems whose multiple versions challenge and problematize the idea of textual “authority.” We have added many new notes that provide contextual information and clarify archaisms and allusions; however, as in previous editions, we make a special effort to minimize commentary that is interpretive rather than, in a limited sense, explanatory. Marginal glosses for archaic, dialect, or unfamiliar words have been reconsidered and, for many poems, increased in number. For the convenience of the student, we have used square brackets to indicate titles supplied by the editors and have, whenever a portion of a text has been omitted, indicated that omission with three asterisks.

Two other features within the anthology facilitate its usefulness in the classroom. Jon Stallworthy’s Essay on Versification has been selectively expanded and moved to the beginning of the volume, where it can give students a valuable grounding in rhythm, meter, rhyme, and poetic forms as a prelude to their reading. Versification terms, indicated in boldfaced type within the essay, are now integrated within the primary index at the back of the book. A new appendix of biographical sketches situates the poets’ lives and works in brief compass.

The Course Guide to accompany *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, by Mark Jeffreys and Debra Fried, makes available to instructors varied reading lists that help shape a course or courses along a number of lines—according to form, figurative language, traditions and counter-traditions, and topics—and to establish relationships among poets and poems of different genres, periods, and concerns. A new electronic ancillary, *The Norton Poetry Workshop CD-ROM*, edited by James F. Knapp, contains texts and recordings of thirty of the most-taught poems from the anthology, supported by a rich array of multimedia, exercises, and study aids. Information for ordering these materials may be obtained from the publisher.

We are indebted to our predecessors, the editors emeriti of *The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, whose presence on the title page signals their ongoing contribution, and to M. H. Abrams, advisor to the Norton English list, for his wise and ready counsel. We also thank the staff at Norton who helped this book come into being: Julia Reidhead used her remarkable resources of energy, intelligence, and good humor to keep the book on course; Marian Johnson gave us important editorial advice early in our labors; Diane O’Connor guided the book through production; Tara Parmiter gracefully facilitated

communications and meetings; Fred Courtright handled the massive task of securing permissions; and Anna Karvellas made the dream of a CD-ROM accompaniment come true. Finally, our project editor, Kurt Wildermuth, paid attention to (and in many cases perfected) the book's "minute particulars" in ways that William Blake would have admired; Kurt also kept a steady eye on the book's larger shape and primary goal: to bring English-language poems originating in different times and places to modern readers—who will, we hope, find pleasure within these covers.

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Among our many critics, advisors, and friends, the following were of especial help in the preparation of the Fourth Edition. For assisting us in researching and preparing texts and other materials, thanks to John Barrell, Mike Bell, Reed Bye, Alfred E. David, Ed Doughtie, Harriet Guest, Skip Hamilton (reference librarian and bibliographer at the University of Colorado at Boulder), David Scott Kastan, Cathy Preston, Mike Preston, Julie Radliff, Jeffrey Robinson, Beth Robertson, James Shapiro, John Stevenson, Dana Symons, James Winn. For preparing the biographical sketches, thanks to Sherri Vanden Akker. Special thanks for their invaluable help goes to Andrea Bundy, Sandie Byrne, Tony Edwards, Charles Middleton (dean of arts and sciences at the University of Colorado at Boulder), Donna Mlinek, David Simpson, and Laura Wilson.

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Versification

A poem is a composition written for performance by the human voice. What your eye sees on the page is the composer's verbal score, waiting for your voice to bring it alive as you read it aloud or hear it in your mind's ear. Unlike our reading of a newspaper, the best reading—that is to say, the most satisfying reading—of a poem involves a simultaneous engagement of eye and ear: the eye attentive not only to the meaning of words, but to their grouping and spacing as lines on a page; the ear attuned to the grouping and spacing of sounds. The more one understands of musical notation and the principles of musical composition, the more one will understand and appreciate a composer's score. Similarly, the more one understands of versification (the principles and practice of writing verse), the more one is likely to understand and appreciate poetry and, in particular, the intimate relationship between its form and its content. *What* a poem says or means is the result of *how* it is said, a fact that poets are often at pains to emphasize. "All my life," said W. H. Auden, "I have been more interested in technique than anything else." And T. S. Eliot claimed that "the conscious problems with which one is concerned in the actual writing are more those of a quasi-musical nature, in the arrangement of metric and pattern, than of a conscious exposition of ideas." Fortunately, the principles of versification are easier to explain than those of musical composition.

The oldest classification of poetry into three broad categories still holds:

1. **Epic:** a long narrative poem, frequently extending to several "books" (sections of several hundred lines), on a great and serious subject. See, for example, Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (p. 152), Milton's *Paradise Lost* (p. 380), Wordsworth's *The Prelude* (p. 714), and Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh* (p. 857). With one notable exception, James Merrill's *The Changing Light at Sandover* (p. 1615), the few poems of comparable length to have been written in the twentieth century—for example, Williams' *Paterson* and Pound's *Cantos*—have a freer, less formal structure.

2. **Dramatic:** poetry, monologue or dialogue, written in the voice of a character assumed by the poet. Space does not permit the inclusion in this anthology of speeches from the many great verse dramas of English literature, but see such dramatic monologues as Tennyson's "Ulysses" (p. 896), Browning's "My Last Duchess" (p. 911), and Richard Howard's response to that poem, "Nikolaus Mardruz to his Master Ferdinand, Count of Tyrol, 1565" (p. 1666).

3. **Lyric:** originally, a song performed in ancient Greece to the accompaniment of a small harplike instrument called a lyre. The term is now used for any fairly short poem in the voice of a single speaker, although that speaker may sometimes quote others. The reader should be wary of identifying the lyric speaker with the poet, since the "I" of a poem will frequently be that of a fictional character invented by the poet. The majority of poems in this book

are lyrics, and the principal types of lyric will be found set out under “Forms” (p. lxxi).

Rhythm

Poetry is the most compressed form of language, and rhythm is an essential component of language. When we speak, we hear a sequence of **syllables**. These, the basic units of pronunciation, can consist of a vowel sound alone or a vowel with attendant consonants: *oh*; *syl-la-ble*. Sometimes *m*, *n*, and *l* are counted as vowel sounds, as in *riddle* (*rid-dl*) and *prism* (*pri-zm*). In words of two or more syllables, one is almost always given more emphasis or, as we say, is more heavily stressed than the others, so that what we hear in ordinary speech is a sequence of such units, variously stressed and unstressed as, for example:

A poem is a **composition** written for performance by the
human voice.

We call such an analysis of stressed and unstressed syllables **scansion** (the action or art of **scanning** a line to determine its division into metrical feet); and a simple system of signs has been evolved to denote stressed and unstressed syllables and any significant pause between them. Adding such scansion marks will produce the following:

× *poem* is a *compo*sition || *writ*ten fōr pērfōrmānce bẏ
the hūmān vōice.

The double bar, known as a **caesura** (from the Latin word for “cut”), indicates a natural pause in the speaking voice, which may be short (as here) or long (as between sentences); the × sign indicates an unstressed syllable, and the ˘ sign indicates one that is stressed.

The pattern of emphasis, stress, or accent can vary from speaker to speaker and situation to situation. If someone were to contradict my definition of a poem, I might reply:

× *poem* is a *compo*sition . . .

with a heavier stress on *is* than on any other syllable in the sentence. The signs × and ˘ make no distinction between varying levels of stress and unstress—it being left to the reader to supply such variations—but some analysts use a third sign ˘ to indicate a stress falling between heavy and light.

Most people pay little or no attention to the sequence of stressed and unstressed syllables in their speaking and writing, but to a poet there is no more important element of a poem.

Meter

If a poem’s rhythm is structured into a recurrence of regular—that is, approximately equal—units, we call it meter (from the Greek word for “measure”). There are four metrical systems in English poetry: the accentual, the accentual-syllabic, the syllabic, and the quantitative. Of these, the second accounts for more poems in the English language—and in this anthology—than do the other three together.

Accentual meter, sometimes called “strong-stress meter,” is the oldest. The earliest recorded poem in the language—that is, the oldest of Old English or

Anglo-Saxon poems, Caedmon's seventh-century "Hymn" (p. 1)—employs a line divided in two by a heavy caesura, each half dominated by the two strongly stressed syllables:

Hé aērēst sċeōp || aēldā béarnūm
 [He first created for men's sons]
 hēofōn tō hrofe || hālig Sċyppend
 [heaven as a roof holy creator]

Here, as in most Old English poetry, each line is organized by stress and by **alliteration** (the repetition of speech sounds—vowels or, more usually, consonants—in a sequence of nearby words). One and generally both of the stressed syllables in the first half-line alliterate with the first stressed syllable in the second half-line.

Accentual meter continued to be used into the late fourteenth century, as in Langland's *Piers Plowman*, which begins:

In ā sōmēr sēsōn, || whān sōft wās thē sōnnē,
 [In a summer season when mild was the sun,]
 I shōpe mē in shrouds, || ās I ā shēpe wēre . . .
 [I clad myself in clothes as if I'd become a sheep . . .]

However, following the Saxons' conquest by the Normans in 1066, Saxon native meter was increasingly supplanted by the metrical patterns of Old French poetry brought to England in the wake of William the Conqueror, although the nonalliterative four-stress line would have a long and lively continuing life—structuring, for example, section 2 of Eliot's "The Dry Salvages" (p. 1250). The Old English metrical system has been occasionally revived in more recent times, as for translations from *Beowulf*—see those by Edwin Morgan (p. 2) and Seamus Heaney (p. 1794)—or the four-stress lines of Coleridge's "Christabel" and Wilbur's "Junk" (p. 1532); and many English poets from Spenser onward have used alliteration in ways that recall the character of Old and Middle English verse.

Accentual-syllabic meter provided the metrical structure of the new poetry to emerge in the fourteenth century, and its basic unit was the **foot**, a combination of two or three stressed and/or unstressed syllables. The four most common metrical feet in English poetry are:

1. **Iambic** (the noun is "iamb"): an unstressed followed by a stressed syllable, as in "New York." Between the Renaissance and the rise of free verse (p. lxxviii) in this century, iambic meter was the dominant rhythm of English poetry, considered by many English as well as classical Latin writers the meter closest to that of ordinary speech. For this reason, iambic meter is also to be found occasionally in the work of prose writers. Dickens' novel *A Tale of Two Cities*, for example, begins:

It wās | thē bēst | ōf tīmes, || ȳt wās | thē wōrst | ōf tīmes . . .

2. **Trochaic** (the noun is "trochee"): a stressed followed by an unstressed syllable, as in the word "London" or the line from the nursery rhyme,

Lóndōn | brídge iſ | fálliŋg | dōwn . . .

This is not to say that "London" can appear only in a trochaic line. Provided its natural stress is preserved, it can take its place comfortably in an iambic line, like that from Eliot's *The Waste Land*:

Á crówd | floëd óv | ẽr Lón | dõn brídge . . .

Whereas iambic meter has a certain gravity, making it a natural choice for poems on solemn subjects, the trochaic foot has a lighter, quicker, more buoyant movement. Hence, for example, its use in Milton's "L'Allegro" (lines 25–29, for example, on p. 366) and Blake's "Introduction" to *Songs of Innocence* (p. 671).

3. **Anapestic** (the noun is "anapest"): two unstressed syllables followed by a stressed syllable, as in "Tennessee" or the opening of Byron's "The Destruction of Sennacherib" (p. 766).

Thẽ Ássýr | iãn cãmẽ dówn | liķẽ thẽ wólř | ẽn thẽ fórd . . .

The last three letters of the word "Assyrian" should be heard as one syllable, a form of contraction known as **elision**.

4. **Dactylic** (the noun is "dactyl"): a stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables, as in "Leningrad." This, like the previous "triple" (three-syllable) foot, the anapest, has a naturally energetic movement, making it suitable for poems with vigorous subjects, though not these only. See Hardy's "The Voice" (p. 1056), which begins:

Wómãn mĩch | mĩssed, hõw yõu | cáll tỗ mẽ, | cáll tỗ mẽ . . .

Iambs and anapests, which have a strong stress on the last syllable, are said to constitute a **rising meter**, whereas trochees and dactyls, ending with an unstressed syllable, constitute a **falling meter**. In addition to these four standard metrical units, there are two other (two-syllable) feet that occur only as occasional variants of the others:

5. **Spondaic** (the noun is "spondee"): two successive syllables with approximately equal strong stresses, as on the words "draw back" in the second of these lines from Arnold's "Dover Beach":

Lĩstẽn! | yõu hẽar | thẽ grát | iĩg rỏar
 Ỏf pẽb | blẽs whĩch | thẽ wávẽs | dráw báck, | aĩd flĩng . . .

6. **Pyrrhic** (the noun is also "pyrrhic"): two successive unstressed or lightly stressed syllables, as in the second foot of the second line above, where the succession of light syllables seems to mimic the rattle of light pebbles that the heavy wave slowly draws back.

Poets, who consciously or instinctively will select a meter to suit their subject, have also a variety of line lengths from which to choose:

1. **Monometer** (one foot): see the fifth and sixth lines of each stanza of Herbert's "Easter Wings" (p. 330), which reflect, in turn, the poverty and thinness of the speaker. Herrick's "Upon His Departure Hence" is a rare example of a complete poem in iambic monometer. The fact that each line is a solitary foot (× ˘) suggests to the eye the narrow inscription of a gravestone, and to the ear the brevity and loneliness of life.

Thus I
 Pass by
 And die,
 As one,

Unknown,
 And gone:
 I'm made
 A shade,
 And laid
 I'th grave,
 There have
 My cave.
 Where tell
 I dwell,
 Farewell.

2. **Dimeter** (two feet): iambic dimeter alternates with iambic pentameter in Donne's "A Valediction of Weeping" (p. 270); and dactylic dimeter (˘ × × | ˘ × ×) gives Tennyson's "The Charge of the Light Brigade" (p. 907) its galloping momentum:

Cannon to right of them,
 Cannon to left of them,
 Cannon in front of them
 Volleyed and thundered;
 Stormed at with shot and shell,
 Boldly they rode and well,
 Into the jaws of Death,
 Into the mouth of hell
 Rode the six hundred.

Lines 4 and 9 each lack a final unstressed syllable—in technical terms such lines are **catalectic**. This shortening, which gives prominence to the stressed syllable necessary for rhyme (p. lxix), is a common feature of rhyming lines in trochaic and dactylic poems.

3. **Trimeter** (three feet): Raleigh's "The Lie" (p. 142) and Roethke's "My Papa's Waltz" (p. 1386) are written in iambic trimeter; and all but the last line of each stanza of Shelley's "To a Skylark" (p. 805) in trochaic trimeter.

4. **Tetrameter** (four feet): Marvell's "To His Coy Mistress" (p. 435) is written in iambic tetrameter; and Shakespeare's "Fear No More the Heat o' the Sun" (p. 247) in trochaic tetrameter.

5. **Pentameter** (five feet): the most popular metrical line in English poetry, the iambic pentameter provides the basic rhythmical framework, or **base rhythm**, of countless poems from the fourteenth century to the twentieth, from Chaucer's "General Prologue" to *The Canterbury Tales* (p. 17) and Shakespeare's sonnets (p. 234) to Hill's "Lachrimae" (p. 1724) and Dunn's "In the Grounds" (p. 1808). It even contributes to the stately prose of the Declaration of Independence:

Ťe hóld | thése trůths | tŝ be | sělf-ěv | řidenť . . .

Anapestic pentameter is to be found in Browning's "Saul":

Aŝ thŷ lóve | iŝ đřscóv | erěd ălmíght | ř, ălmíght | ř, bě próved
 Thŷ power, | thăt exists | wřth aňd fór | řť, řf be | iňg bělóved!

A missing syllable in the first foot of the second line gives emphasis to the important word "power."

6. **Hexameter** (six feet): The opening sonnet of Sidney's "Astrophil and Stella" (p. 192) and Dowson's "Non sum qualis eram bonae sub regno Cynarae" (p. 1106) are written in iambic hexameter, a line sometimes known as an **alexandrine** (probably after a twelfth-century French poem, the *Roman d'Alexandre*). A single alexandrine is often used to provide a resonant termination to a stanza of shorter lines, as, for example, the Spenserian stanza (p. lxxiii) or Hardy's "The Convergence of the Twain" (p. 1053), in which the shape of the stanza suggests the iceberg that is the poem's subject. Swinburne's "The Last Oracle" is written in trochaic hexameter:

Dáy bǵ | dáy thǵ | shádǵw | shínes iǵ | heáven bǵ | hólǵđen . . .

7. **Heptameter** (seven feet): Kipling's "Tommy" (p. 1076) is written in iambic heptameter (or **fourteeners**, as they are often called, from the number of their syllables), with an added initial syllable in three of the four lines that make up the second half of each stanza.

8. **Octameter** (eight feet): Browning's "A Toccata of Galuppi's" (p. 926) is the most famous example of the rare trochaic octameter.

Poets who write in strict conformity to a single metrical pattern will achieve the music of a metronome and soon drive their listeners away. Variation, surprise, is the very essence of every artist's trade; and one of the most important sources of metrical power and pleasure is the perpetual tension between the regular and the irregular, between the expected and the unexpected, the base rhythm and the variation.

John Hollander has spoken of the "metrical contract" that poets enter into with their readers from the first few words of a poem. When Frost begins "The Gift Outright"—

Thǵ lánd | wás óurs | bǵfóre | wǵ wǵre | thǵ lánd's

—we expect what follows to have an iambic base rhythm, but the irregularity or variation in the fourth foot tells us that we are hearing not robot speech but human speech. The stress on "we" makes it, appropriately, one of the two most important words in the line, "we" being the most important presence in the "land."

Frost's poem will serve as an example of ways in which skillful poets will vary their base rhythm:

1. Thǵ lánd | wás óurs | bǵfóre | wǵ wǵre | thǵ lánd's.
2. Shǵ wás | óur lánd || móre thǵn | ǵ hún | drǵd yǵars
3. Bǵfóre | wǵ wǵre | hér péo | plǵ. || Shǵ|wás óurs
4. Iǵ Máss | ǵchú | sǵtts, || iǵ | Vǵrgín | ǵǵ,
5. Bǵt wǵ | wǵre Éng | lánd's, || stǵll | cǵlón | ǵǵǵ,
6. Pǵssǵss | iǵng whát | wǵ stǵll | wǵre ún | pǵssǵssǵd | bǵ.
7. Pǵssǵssǵd | bǵ whát | wǵ nów | nó móre | pǵssǵssǵd.
8. Sómǵthǵng | wǵ wǵre | wǵthhóld | iǵng máde | ǵs wǵák
9. Uǵtǵl | wǵ fǵúnd | óút thǵt | ít wás | óǵrsǵlǵvs
10. Wǵ wǵre | wǵthhóld | iǵng frǵm | óǵr lánd | ǵf lív | iǵng,
11. Áǵd fǵrth | wǵth fǵúnd | sǵlǵvá | tiǵn iǵ | sǵrrén | dǵr.
12. Sǵch ǵs | wǵ wǵre | wǵ gǵve | óǵrsǵlǵvs | óǵtright
13. (Thǵ déed | ǵf gǵft | wás mán | ǵ déeds | ǵf wár)

14. Tở thề **lánd** | **vaguelý** | **réål** | iژیڭ | **wéstwárd**,
 15. Bút **still** | **uñstór** | iэд, || **árt** | lěss, || **ún** | **ěnhanced**,
 16. **Súch** às | **shé wás**, || **súch** às | **shé** woıld | **běcôme**.

The iambic pentameter gives the poem a stately movement appropriate to the unfolding history of the United States. In the trochaic “reversed feet” at the start of lines 2, 10, 12, and 16, the stress is advanced to lend emphasis to a key word or, in the case of line 8, an important syllable. Spondees in lines 2 (“our land”) and 3 (“her people”) bring into equal balance the two partners whose union is the theme of the poem. Such additional heavy stresses are counterbalanced by the light pyrrhic feet at the end of lines 4 and 5, in the middle of line 10, or toward the end of line 14. The multiple irregularities of that line give a wonderful impression of the land stretching westward into space, just as the variations of line 16 give a sense of the nation surging toward its destiny in time. It must be added, however, that scansion is to some extent a matter of interpretation, in which the rhetorical emphasis a particular reader prefers alters the stress pattern. Another reader might—no less correctly—prefer to begin line 9, for example:

Uñtil | **wé** foınd . . .

An important factor in varying the pattern of a poem is the placing of its pauses or caesurae. One falling in the middle of a line—as in line 4 above—is known as a medial caesura; one falling near the start of a line, an initial caesura; and one falling near or at the end of a line, a terminal caesura. When a caesura occurs as in lines 13 and 14 above, those lines are said to be **end-stopped**. Lines 3 and 9, however, are called **run-on lines** (or, to use a French term, they exhibit **enjambment**—“a striding over”), because the thrust of the incompleted sentence carries on over the end of the verse line. Such transitions tend to increase the pace of the poem, as the end-stopping of lines 10 through 16 slows it down.

A strikingly original and influential blending of the Old English accentual and more modern accentual-syllabic metrical systems was **sprung rhythm**, conceived and pioneered by Gerard Manley Hopkins.

Finding the cadences of his Victorian contemporaries—what he called their “common rhythm”—too measured and mellifluous for his liking, he sought for a stronger, more muscular verse movement. Strength he equated with stress, arguing that “even one stressed syllable may make a foot, and consequently two or more stresses may come running [one after the other], which in common rhythm can, regularly speaking, never happen.” In his system of sprung rhythm, each foot began with a stress and could consist of a single stressed syllable (´), a trochee (´ ×), a dactyl (´ × ×), or what he called a **first paeon** (´ × × ×). His lines will, on occasion, admit other unstressed syllables, as in the sonnet “Felix Randal” (p. 1063):

Félíx | **Rándål**, || thề | **fárríer**, || Õ iş hě | **deád** thến? || mỷ | **dútý** áll |
 énděd,
Who hắve | **watched** hỉs | **móuld** ỏf mắn, || big- | **bóned** aỉd | **hárdý**-
hándsỏme
Píníng, || **píníng**, || tầl | **tíme** whến | **réasỏn** | **ramblẻd** iữ ỉt | **ánd** sỏme
Fátầl | **four** đỉs | **órders**, || **flẻshed** thẻre, || **áll** cỏn | **tẻndẻd**?

A poetry structured on the principle that strength is stress is particularly well suited to stressful subjects, and the sprung rhythm of what Hopkins called his

“terrible sonnets” (p. 1064/67), for example, gives them a dramatic urgency, a sense of anguished struggle that few poets have equalled in accentual-syllabic meter.

A number of other poets have experimented with two other metrical systems.

Syllabic meter measures only the number of syllables in a line, without regard to their stress. Being an inescapable feature of the English language, stress will of course appear in lines composed on syllabic principles, but will fall variously, and usually for rhetorical emphasis, rather than in any formal metrical pattern. When Marianne Moore wished to attack the pretentiousness of much formal “Poetry” (p. 1218), she shrewdly chose to do so in **syllabics**, as lines in syllabic meter are called. The effect is carefully informal and prosaic, and few unalerted readers will notice that there are 19 syllables in the first line of each stanza; 22 in the second; 11 in the third (except for the third line of the third stanza, which has 7); 5 in the fourth; 8 in the fifth; and 13 in the sixth. That the poem succeeds in deflating Poetry (with a capital P) while at once celebrating poetry and creating it is not to be explained by Moore’s talent for arithmetic so much as by her unobtrusive skill in modulating the stresses and pauses of colloquial speech. The result is a music like that of good free verse (p. lxxviii).

Because stress plays a less important role in such Romance languages as French and Italian and in Japanese, their poetry tends to be syllabic in construction, and Pound brilliantly adapts the form of three-line, seventeen-syllable Japanese **haiku** in a poem whose title is an integral part of the whole:

In a Station of the Metro

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;
Petals on a wet, black bough.

The syllable count (8, 12, 7) bears only a token relation to that of the strict Japanese pattern (5, 7, 5), but the poem succeeds largely because its internal rhymes (p. lxix)—*Station* / apparition; *Metro* / petals / wet; *crowd* / bough—point up a series of distinct stressed syllables that suggest, in an impressionist fashion, a series of distinct white faces.

A number of other modern poets—among them Auden, Dylan Thomas, and Gunn—have written notable poems in syllabics; their efforts to capture the spirit—if not the letter—of a foreign linguistic and poetic tradition may be compared with those of many poets since the Renaissance who have attempted to render Greek and Latin meters into English verse, using the fourth metrical system to be considered here.

Quantitative meter, which structures most Greek, Sanskrit, and later Roman poetry, is based on notions of a syllable’s duration in time or its *length*. This is determined by various conventions of spelling as well as by the type of vowel sound it contains. Complexities arise because Latin has more word-stress than does ancient Greek, and hence there is often an alignment of stress and quantity in foot-patterns of later Roman verse. This is ironic in light of the efforts, on the part of some Renaissance English poets, to “ennoble” the vernacular tradition by following classical metrical models. Although poets like Spenser and Sidney devised elaborate rules for determining the “length” of English syllables according to ancient rules, the theoretical prescriptions often generated poems in which “long” syllables are in fact stressed syllables. Indeed, one defender of quantitative meter in English, Thomas Campion, explicitly recommended a metrical system aligning stress with quantity; he